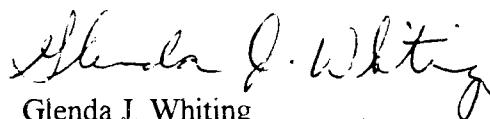SUBJ:   CHANGES TO THE HEADQUARTERS MERIT SELECTION PLAN

1.   PURPOSE. This change transmits revised pages to Chapter 5, Merit Selection Process.

2.   EXPLANATION OF CHANGES. This change replaces the guidance regarding area of consideration, recruitment period, application procedures, and application forms. These changes provide flexibility as set forth in 3330.1B, Merit Promotion Program.

### Page Control Chart

| Remove Pages | Dated | Insert Pages | Dated |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9 and 10 | 3/2/88 | 9 and 10 | 4/21/95 |

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## CHAPTER 5. MERIT SELECTION PROCESS

8    MERIT SELECTION PROCESS.

   a.    Preparation and Distribution of Vacancy Announcements.  Vacancy announcements will be prepared and distributed by AHR-19 in accordance with paragraphs 22a and b of the Order 3330.1B.  A listing of distribution points is contained in Appendix 4 of this order.

   b.    Areas of Consideration.  The intent and purpose of an area of consideration are to establish a geographic or organizational area which will:

      (1)    Produce enough best-qualified candidates (generally at least five) for a specific recruitment action; and

      (2)    Minimize recruitment and relocation costs.

*   c.    Minimum Area of Consideration.  The headquarters human resource management division shall determine the areas of consideration appropriate for locating a sufficient number of well-qualified candidates. The minimum area of consideration shall be the principal organizational unit within the Washington headquarters for grades 15 and below.  A principal organizational unit is an office or service in Washington.

   d.    Extending Area of Consideration.  Authority to extend the area of consideration resides at the specialist level in AHR-19.  The area of consideration may be extended if either of the following considerations apply:

      (1)    A vacancy announcement does not result in a sufficient number of highly-qualified applicants.

      (2)    It can be reasonably anticipated that the area of consideration will not produce a sufficient number of highly-qualified applicants.                                                       *

\*     e.     Withdrawn - CHG 1.

f.     Recruitment Period.  The intent of the recruitment period is to permit applicants a sufficient period of time to become aware of a vacancy and to prepare and mail application materials.  Closing dates must fall on a normal business day.  The minimum recruitment periods are:

| Area of Consideration | Open Period |
| --- | --- |
| Headquarters-Wide and below | 14 calendar days |
| All other categories | 21 calendar days |

g.     Application Receipt Deadlines.  All application forms must be postmarked on or before the closing date specified on the announcement and received by the close of business on the 5th working day to be considered.  Handcarried application forms will be accepted, if received by the close of business on the closing date of the announcement.  Ingrade/downgrade and other applicants eligible for noncompetitive appointment are not covered by this requirement.

h.     Application Procedures.  Federal regulations consider the filling of an application for employment to be personal business; therefore, employees are advised on the following prohibitions:

(1)     Employees may not use penalty mail or interoffice mail.  Applications received from these sources will not be considered and will be destroyed.  Employees will be advised of the reason for nonconsideration.

\*     (2)     Employees may not use agency personnel to prepare applications.

i.     Application Forms.

(1)     Acceptable forms include:  SF- 171, Application for Federal Employment; OF-612, Optional Application for Federal Employment; resumes; or other forms of application.  Application forms must contain the information outlined in the vacancy announcement.

(2)     WA-3330-9, Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) Evaluation.  Instructions are listed on the form.  This form is optional; however, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit this form.